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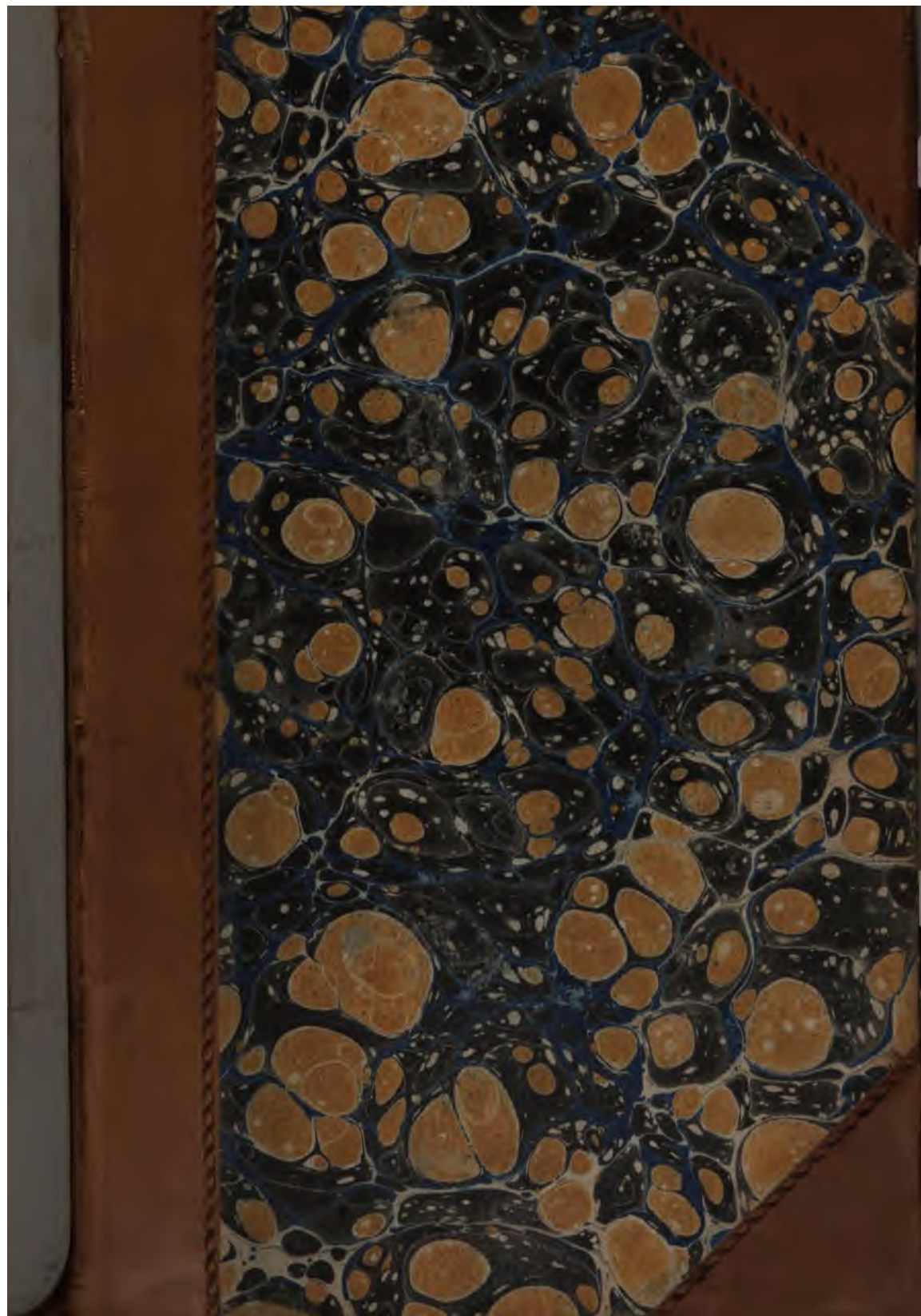
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J.H. 1831

CONFORMITY

WITH

THE NATIONAL CHURCH.

AN ANSWER

TO

“ REASONS FOR NON-CONFORMITY,”

BY JOHN LOCKE ;

PUBLISHED IN A LIFE OF MR. LOCKE, BY LORD KING.



Πλην εις ὃ εφθασαμεν, τῷ αὐτῷ τοιχεῖν κανονι, το αὐτο φρονεῖν.—Philip. iii. 16.

LONDON :

C. J. G. & F. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, AND WATERLOO-PLACE, PALL-MALL.

MDCCCXXI.

503.

PREFACE.

It may be asked, what motive should have induced Lord King to put before the public the private memoranda of his illustrious ancestor Mr. Locke, at this particular juncture ; when, for so many years, they had been suffered to repose in secrecy beneath the veil of testamentary confidence ?

Was it from a sudden philanthropy, that he conceived this method of casting a few gleams of wintry philosophy upon a cold and dreary desolation ?—Was it to procure fame to the dead or the living ?—Certainly Mr. Locke's own fame was secure before, and it seems hardly a legitimate reason for disturbing the ashes of the dead, to procure a spurious celebrity to the living.

But the truth is, by a literary legerdemain, not strictly in good taste, this work, which purports to contain the life and miscellaneous opinions of John Locke, is made a vehicle for conveying the crude politics of Lord King ; as

if Mr. Locke, had he been now living, would really have supported the politics of Lord King.

It must be observed also, that the opinions introduced into this work, are extracted by their editor from a mass of papers, which seem to have required at least an impartial inspector, if the true character of Mr. Locke's mind were intended to be elucidated. Mr. Locke declares of himself, that it was his custom to examine disputed points, by stating all that could be said for and against a proposition, and then to decide his own conclusions about the truth, by comparing the two opposite arguments: and, although it cannot be doubted that the "Reasons for Non-conformity" were seriously proposed by him, it is probable another document may have shewn those "better reasons," *which induced himself to conform to the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England*; and it is to be regretted that these are not preserved with his papers.

These "Reasons," however, for a licentious non-conformity, resting principally upon an assumption that there is no distinguishable difference between the claims of the Church of England and those of sectaries under a self-ordained ministry, are put forth by a member of the British legislature: one whose duty is, to promote the welfare of the people, and to uphold the constitution in Church and State!—It is fit and proper, therefore, that they should not be left without their true character being shewn; and

that the reasoning of Mr. Locke on this subject is both unsound in itself, and evidently conducted under a bias towards the proposition, he professes to discuss.

It is especially important, that the legislative colleagues of the noble author, to whom, at the present crisis, true views about *the Church* may be essential to its existence in England, should be fully apprised of the real character of this attack on its national pre-eminence: and to them, therefore, the following brief considerations are, in a particular manner, and with real deference, submitted.

The multitude of sects among the professors of Christianity need not, surely, be increased.—It has already produced incalculable mischief.—By rendering men insecure upon religious truths, it has, of necessity, made them unstable also in their general opinions and principles. No one will deny that such is the striking characteristic of the present times.

But the sacred Scriptures shew very plainly, that the Church of Christ was committed to a “set of men,” to whom authority was given; and, that it was to be conducted by an *authorised* ministry. It should seem, therefore, to be matter of evidence, and nothing else, where the delegated authority is now to be found: and it does seem also to be necessary, that the evidence by which that point should be judged of, be such as is within the ordinary reason of mankind. For how should men judge of an

ordination, which rests upon "*nothing, but*" the bare assertion of another?

The difference in these two propositions is that, which forms the essential distinction between the Church of England, and the schismatic sects which surround her.

The reasons of Mr. Locke are broken into short paragraphs, that the answers may be found opposed to their respective arguments.

30th Dec. 1830.

CONFORMITY

WITH

THE NATIONAL CHURCH.

LOCKE'S DEFENCE OF
NON-CONFORMITY.

§ 1. ALL the arguments used from the Church, or Established Church, &c. amount to no more than this, that there are a certain set of men in the world, upon whose credit I must, *without further examination*, venture my salvation : so that all the directions and precepts to examine doctrines, try the Spirit, take heed what you believe, hold the faith, &c. are to no purpose, when all the measures and stamps of truth, whereby I am to receive

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ENGLAND.

§ 1. THE words “ without further examination,” made use of in Mr. Locke's argument, imply a previous examination, as that which “ the Church, or Established Church, &c.” is understood to have received. And such is accordant to the fact. The Established Church is founded on the basis of a preliminary scrutiny into its pretensions—and the question of its being the *true Church* or not, has received a decision in the affirmative by that deliberative voice among the people, which is held most capable of judging of such a fact.

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it, will then be only the hand that delivers it, and not the appearance of recititude it carries with it.

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The examination of doctrines, the trying of spirits, and the taking heed what we believe, are apostolical premonitions in the establishing of the Church. St. Paul argues first to prove the truth of our Lord's priesthood; and *having done that*, he says, "*Seeing then*, that we have a great High Priest, let us hold fast our profession." The proofs of the priesthood having been first duly weighed, the profession offered by it is required to be held without further debate.

The Church of England possesses, in the history of the Reformation, a proof of this preliminary enquiry—and what is secured to the people by her establishment as the national Church, is, that the spirits, which appear within her precincts, have *all been tried* upon the fundamental points of the Christian faith.

§ 2. This is to deal worse with men in their great eternal concernment of their souls, than in the short and trivial concernment of their estates; for, though it be the allowed

§ 2. The simile proposed in this passage is very happily conceived for illustrating the value of private opinion upon the doctrines of the Church; but the parallel is not truly stated. The examination of

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prerogative of princes to stamp silver and gold money, yet every man has the liberty to examine even those very pieces that have the magistrate's stamp and image; and if they have the suspicion and appearance of a false alloy, they may avoid being cozened, and not receive them: the stamp makes it neither good nor current.

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a coin, if taken in a proper light, respects the truth of the stamp, and not the value of the metal; because if the stamp be true, the coin is good for more than the mere gold. An investigation of the sterling of a coin therefore offered in circulation bears a real analogy with an examination, not of the doctrines of the Established Church, as Mr. Locke puts the case, but of that of its teachers, by the rule of doctrine acknowledged to be sterling within it. The stamp of the crown is put upon gold and silver, and the stamp of the national Church is put upon certain tenets; and the rejection of false coin is analogous to the rejection of a Calvinistic preacher, in a Church of England pulpit.

In case of public fraud by the government itself, there would be reason for a public reform of the coin, and if any one can shew that the tenets of the Church of England are a false alloy, and not the sterling of the reformation, he may expose her fraud. But no one has the right, by his private voice, to

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demand that lead be used instead of gold, or that the tenets of Calvin be received in the Church of England instead of her own. The most precious metal has been proved and acknowledged, and that must continue to be received, till it can be shewn that lead is more precious than gold.

§ 3. But no authority that I know on earth, unless it be the infallible Church of Rome, boldly claims a right to coin opinions into truths, and make them current by their authority.

§ 3. There is a happy truth conveyed also in this passage, of which occasion may be taken to illustrate the difference between the assumptions of the Church of Rome, and the legitimate authority of the Church of Christ. The former, in its attribute of vice-deity and consequent infallibility, does claim to coin opinions into doctrines, and, as she would have them to be regarded, truths; but what the Church of Christ claims to do, is to coin "the truth" into "opinions." What the particular character of the truth may be, which is to be the proper subject of proposal from the Church to the people, is *declared and settled* in the very foundation of the Church, and of those new superstructures

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which may, from time to time, be raised up upon the old foundations. Of the whole body of Christ this was declared by competent and legitimate authority in the foundation of Christianity. Of the Church of England, which is a newly repaired building upon old foundations, it was settled by competent and legitimate authority, and fixed by institutions equally well suited to the *preservation* of true doctrines, as that of the older Churches had been for the *propagation* of new doctrines. As the distinctions of heresy or schism have shewn themselves in the world, it has been necessary for the Church to guard its people in the truth, as well by taking care *to exclude* false tenets, as *by ingrafting* the true.

§ 4. And yet in all places, all men are *unreasonably* required to receive and profess doctrines for truths, because this governor, or that priest, says they are so. Yet how senseless soever, it helps not the case, nor profits the opinions, of any one sort of them.

§ 4. As regards the Church of England, men are not *unreasonably* required to receive doctrines. There were reasons for the adoption of its tenets, and those reasons were not only sifted by long contests, which the reforming priesthood maintained, and adopted after due deliberation by the wisest and best spirits of an age, raised up to

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the fullest sense of the subject, by a long course of events which had pressed all the best energies of the world into its service, but they were sealed with the best blood of the most enlightened Christians that ever breathed. How, then, can it be said that men are called on to profess the opinions of the Church of England without reason ?

What the Church of England claims over her own communion is to be the interpreter of Scripture, not by any opinions of her individual members, but by the common consent of all; and wherever her public interpretation can be shewn to be wrong, it is liable to be corrected. But the proof of error is not to be submitted to the crude opinion of individuals; for how should it? since, for every man, who affirms one mode of interpretation, another may be produced who thinks differently. But we have the blood of her martyrs as a seal to the records of her public tenets, and in testimony of the truth of her doctrines; and this may assure the weak and wavering, that she is built upon opinions that were sincere, and

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were delivered by men of piety and erudition. Her doctrines, therefore, are clearly sterling and precious to every Englishman, and this should render her a palladium in the eyes of the nation. Martyrs of pre-eminent piety, as those were of the Reformation, are not to be bought at all markets, nor at all times.

§ 5. For if the pope demands an obedient faith to him and his emissaries, the bishops of England, that they, and such as have episcopal ordination under them, are the true Church, and are to be believed;—

§ 5. The reasons, why the pope and the bishops of England require their tenets to be believed, are wholly different, though they are here made to appear the same; the pope requiring it because he is the vicegerent of God, and infallible in his own person; the bishops of England, because their Church is authorised by Christ, and observes the Gospel of Christ for its rule of doctrine. The doctrines do not emanate from them, but they are ordained into the doctrines; the truth of which they have no part in fabricating, but which, being found perfect, they are appointed to uphold; as well as to administer the sacraments of that truth which is thus professed. Now the doc-

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trines of the Romish Church do emanate from the Church itself, and the Scripture may be dispensed with by her authority.

§ 6. the Presbyterians tell us, those of Presbyterian ordination have no less authority : and that in all matters of doctrine and discipline they are to be believed. The Independents and Anabaptists think they have as much reason to be heard as the former, and the Quakers think themselves the only true guides, whilst they bid us be guided by the light that is within us.

§ 6. The great object in a national Church is the providing of a security to *all people* for participating in the sacraments and vital truths of religion : and the safest principles must be those by which that object may be most securely attained. The Church of England, by its Articles and Liturgy, aims at accomplishing this desirable object ; and until it can be shewn that some other system is better calculated to bring the whole body of Christian doctrines and duties before the people in a perpetual gyration, as the yearly services of the English Church do present the great body of the Scriptures with their exposition before all classes at all times ; inviting *all* to repentance ; opening the door to *all* that will listen to her ; and tending to every personal disease of the conscience which demands the solace of a Christian ministry, it does appear that she

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fulfils the true end and object of a national Church better than any other system which has been proposed or acted upon. The Church of England holds it good and right that all men should be baptized with water and the Spirit; it is, therefore, expedient that she allow the baptism of infants, and "to suffer the little children to come unto Christ:" and this is a safer doctrine than the Anabaptists', who would exclude all under age from that inaugurating sacrament. The Church of England holds that the doctrines of the Gospel should be inculcated through all generations by preaching, and the pulpit is a better guarantee for the dispersion of doctrines *to the whole community*, than the silent communion of the Quakers; whose public institutions can be of no avail to any person not previously instructed in the Scriptures, and which, therefore, imply the acquisition of that by all men, which it is part of the business of a national Church to impart and instil.

When, therefore, Mr. Locke urges as a reason against the au-

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thority of the Church of England, that other men entertain as good an opinion of their own views, as the professors of the Church of England do of their's, he gives no reason but that, which would equally show the wandering life of desert tribes, to be as good as the established institutions of a Christian society; because these equally entertain an exclusive opinion in favour of their own state.

If there be any value in the *guarantees* of public institutions, so founded as to give security to those who are born within them, I apprehend that they must be as valuable in the institutions of a national Church, as in those of national courts of justice. And that the Church of England has the best possible *guarantees* for the soundness of her doctrines as well as the goodness of her ritual, cannot be doubted by any who will take the pains to recur to her original foundation and established constitution.

§ 7. All these we have within ourselves, every

§ 7. If, again, Mr. Locke means that the existence of schismatic

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one of them calling on us to hearken to them, as the sole deliverers of un-mixed truth in doctrine and discipline : this they all do severally with the same confidence and zeal, and for aught I know, with the same Divine authority ; for as for human authority, I am sure that weighs nothing in the case.

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opinions is to be taken in proof of their truth, or, on the other hand, that the truth of a national Church, which has been established by a deliberative and authorised body, is to be taken as false, or even as of questionable truth, only because there are schismatics who dispute its tenets, I think his argument is not worth much. The same logic would render the notions of honour and honesty in the theory of morals questionable and to be questioned, because there are men who hold dishonesty allowable, and fraud and rapine to be commended.

With respect to the Divine authority of the Church, this great reasoner is not certainly to be looked up to as an arbitrator. His own fixed opinion was, that no authority was ever so high as to call upon him for reverence, except as he perceived in its ordinances the "ratio imperandi." Now, that is certainly not a rule of practical usefulness to mankind, and it is not the rule of Christianity. Mr. Locke speaks of schismatics, who hold opposite opinions to the Church of England, who are op-

posed also to one another, and yet, for aught he knows, all may be equally of Divine right in their authority to teach. This is not a style of reasoning which will satisfy men really desirous of arriving at the truth, because it sets the inquiry between doubt and indifference as between a Scylla and Charybdis, which, together, shut up the hope of any further progress. The truth of the matter is, that the Divine right of the Church means the right given by our Lord of imparting the sacraments, and administering in matters which relate to the inculcation of the Christian covenant on earth ; and as there cannot be two truths contradicting each other, so neither can there be two administrations under our Saviour's ordination, which contradict one another.

In deciding the question, therefore, as to which of two contradictory doctrines may be the true, it should seem the first step to ascertain what is the relative value of the authority, under which each party professes to propound its doctrines ; for else, if it were to

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be decided by the choice of doctrine, "for its apparent rectitude," which Mr. Locke holds the true ground of choice, a man might, with the evidences of the Gospel before his eyes, choose with impunity the doctrines of the Koran as most agreeable to his ideas of good and right. In considering this question of authority, then, as between a Church apostolically derived, and those which are self-ordained, it may be asked whether, when our Lord commanded *the apostles alone*, "to go and teach and baptize," it can be contended that that authority was equally given to all the disciples : or when our Lord commanded the apostles "to teach and baptize all nations," will it be affirmed that the injunction was intended to be confined to the existing generation only ? The care which the apostles took to put the sacred mission into sound minds of their own communion, shews their opinion, that the transmission of the Gospel and its ministry was to be made through persons derived from themselves ; and to no other cause, than this

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care for the future, can St. Paul's direction to Titus be ascribed, "that he should lay hands suddenly on no man." We must then, at last, refer to an apostolic descent : and how is that to be evidenced, but by such testimonies as are naturally calculated to prove such a fact? We say, then, that the Church of England shews this apostolic origin, and that while its authority is derived from the apostles, its doctrines are taken from the Gospel, as the only sure criterion of what the apostles taught ; and *this union of sound doctrine and legitimate authority*, is that which gives pre-eminence to the Church of England. The Church of Rome has an apostolical authority in its priesthood, but its doctrines are not built upon the Gospel. The Anabaptists have neither authority in their ministry, nor warrant of the Gospel, as the whole Church of England affirms, for their doctrine. If the Church of Rome would put away her pretensions to a more than ministerial function, and would purge away the corruptions which those pretensions have

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§ 8. If we will look further, and add to these the Lutheran, Greek, Arminian, Jacobite, and Abyssine Churches, and yet further out of the borders of Christianity into the Jewish synagogues and Mahometan mosques, the mufti and rabbis are men of authority, and think themselves as little deceivers, or deceived, as any of the rest. What will it avail these and the Church of England among so many equal pretenders, to say they are the true Church, and must be believed; and have the magistrate on their side, and must be obeyed. If they are to be believed the true Church, because Bishop G. or Dr. S. says so, Mr.

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brought into her, she would become such as the Church of England is: but no purging away of errors could ever raise up the intrusive ministry of the Anabaptists to be the priesthood of the Christian Church.

§ 8. Whether the Church of England rests her claim to be the true Church on her own mere assertion that she is so, may be left to the candid opinion of every person; but what shall be said of Mr. Locke, who thus blends in one common charge of usurpation every institution which professes a sacred character? And why is it that all the members of this unhappy caste are thus obnoxious in Mr. Locke's views to the alien act, and all liable to be suspected without any discrimination of persons? The difference, however, between the Church of England and the Quakers is this: that what the Church of England *says* of herself, she proves by testimonies and *guarantees*, of which every man is in possession, and can judge for himself; what the Quakers *say* of them-

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B. or Dr. O. will say as much for the Presbyterians or Independents. Cardinal H. and Mr. P. for the Popish and Quakers, and upon the same authority; for they are all men that say it, endowed with the like faculties to know themselves, and subject to the same frailties of mistaking or imposing.

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selves, has no proof but that they *say it*; and of their authority for saying it no one can judge but he who says it. The difference is precisely the same as distinguishes the proofs of Christ's authority above that of Mahomet: for Christ *said he* was to be believed, but then he manifested his authority by matters of which men could judge for themselves; but Mahomet required to be believed, because *he said* he was to be believed, and without any other evidence. If Mr. Locke had held that a trial by compurgators, in which the truth was judged of because the person interested in saying so and so, did say so and so, was in no respect different from a trial by means of evidence, then and only then can he be excused for the light in which he has here represented the claims of his own Church. And if he did say so, I think his judgment on the relative claims of different Churches will not be held for much.

The claim of temporal authority, if the Church of England can properly be said to have any, is the

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same only, as belongs to every Church that is national. The regard, entertained for the truth, has always induced an opinion, that that Church which has the best *guarantees* for being true, should be the Church, under which the ignorant mass of the people should be brought up and instructed. The notion also, that the springs of national prosperity are more or less secure and strong, in proportion as they are more or less connected with the abstract truth and built upon right and religious principles, have led men to mingle up in their civil institutions a portion of the spiritual body; and this is necessarily of the same well *guaranteed* profession as the former. From these causes has arisen the national Church of England; she is not national by the claim of the Church, but in virtue of her acceptance by the people in their deliberative voice, and by the same right that the King or any other public authority exists in the state.

The Church assumes no inherent authority over the whole peo-

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ple, but the negative one of excluding from its communion ; and that is exercised in virtue of its apostolic authority. " Whoso believeth in me," says our Lord, " keepeth my words : " if a profligate come to the Church, the priesthood have a right to say that he is not a Christian because he believeth not in Christ, and, until repentance, he may be excluded from communicating : that the Church has an inherent right to claim a like exclusion of such a person from civil offices, I am not prepared to hold ; except, as by the national constitution an authority is given to her to deliberate on civil subjects ; but then she is bound to give her opinion upon her own views, which should be those of abstract considerations, and not upon temporal grounds ; for she was installed in the civil council to impart a portion of abstract truth to its deliberations, and not to discuss civil questions, of which lay men should be the better judges. For the same reason, I am not prepared to say, that the State is bound to confine its

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civil officers to those who are of the national Church, if circumstances call for a different regime. But it seems a contradiction that men, who regard their Church to be the true Church, should consent to another priesthood, which they hold to be untrue, being set forward to the people as equally entitled to their reverence with that which is true. And where a State has been established and grown up by the combined energies of civil and ecclesiastical powers, and its fabric been formed by an intermixture of the two, it seems a difficult thing to conjecture, how the same State should exist after the removal of either one or other of its ancient constituents. The walls of ancient cities, which were built of alternate layers of bricks and reeds might be thought by those, who nevertheless were protected by them, to be unworthily constructed; but the destruction of the reeds would certainly have brought down the whole fabric, and laid the people open to the powers of the wilderness; and it seems as if the heats, which incen-

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diaries have placed round our national institutions, though directed against the Church solely, *must, in destroying her, bring down the whole fabric together.*

§ 9. If they will prove themselves to be in the right, or to be the true Church, they take indeed the right course; but then they lay by their authority in proposing, as I myself lay it by in considering, their arguments. They appeal to my reason, and that I must make use of to examine and judge; but then we are but just where we shall be, whether the Church of England be or be not in the right, whether its constitution be or be not "*Jure Divino*," i. e. every one judging for himself of what Church he thinks it best and safest to be.

§ 9. Mr. Locke puts the alternative of a Church proving itself to be in the right and proving itself to be the true Church, as the same thing; but the proposition is sophistical, and the fallacy is, that it is true with respect to the Church of England, and false with respect to others. For the Church of England rests upon being the true Church, and then says it is in the right; and so it must be, for else it might be said, that the Church of Christ could be true and yet false, for that is the same thing as not "in the right." But the sectaries rest upon "being in the right," and that upon some single point of doctrine or discipline: and then, assuming their reasons to be right on this single point, they assume a general untruth to the Church which they oppose. But let it be supposed, for the sake of argument, that the

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Anabaptists should be right in deferring baptism to an adult age, would such a fallacy in the true Church give an authority to unauthorised persons to baptize at all; or would it give a *guarantee* to the world that they were the true priesthood, because of an error in those who had the better title on other grounds.

The error in Mr. Locke's argument is, that he puts an alternative of terms as equal in degree, whereas one of them is dependent upon the other; and under this fallacy he argues, as if both terms were equally to be proposed to the reason, in considering what is the true Church. Just as if a citizen might equally discuss the authority of a court of justice and the reasons of its judge, as equal terms, in resolving the question whether or not he should submit to its jurisdiction.

It does not seem, therefore, the right way for a man to decide about the truth of a Church, by his individual opinion upon this or that doctrine; but he should look to the securities he has for

its being true, and for the general truth of its tenets. Now the securities, which a man has for the truth of the Church of England and for the truth of her doctrines, are—*First,—that her authority is derived by regular imposition of hands, from the apostles to the present priesthood. Secondly,—that her doctrines are those of the Gospel, according to the interpretation of her whole body, and not of private authority. Thirdly,—that her modern structure is laid in the blood of martyrs, properly assignable to her existing institutions ; and of whom the testimony was directed to points which had grown up with the changes of the times from those of the apostles.*

If private opinion upon points of doctrine were to make a Church true or false, then the Church would not be in the priesthood, but in the people ; and the opinion of the Athenians, about the resurrection of our Lord, would have made St. Paul's apostleship untrue. St. Paul does never, therefore, debate the question of doctrine with those whom he teaches,

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but trusts entirely to the *guarantees* of his personal title, for the people's acceptance of his Gospel. "I bear," he says, "in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." (Gal. vi. 17.) By the evidences of himself he was to be judged and accepted; and in virtue of these, he demanded an acquiescence in his doctrine, from those who would claim the benefit of his communion.

§ 10. If it be said, as it is, "we have the law on our side, our constitution is established by the law of the land, you ought to be of our Church because the civil magistrate commands it;" I know not how short a cut this may be to peace, or rather uniformity, but I am sure it is a great way about, if not quite out of the way, to truth: for if the civil magistrates have the power to institute religions, and force men to such ways of worship they shall think fit to enact, I desire any one,

§ 10. That men owe a natural reverence to those institutions in which they are born, cannot be questioned as a general proposition. Nor is there any more sense in rejecting authorities only because of an hypothesis, which supposes a natural freedom in all men, (but of which state no perfect pattern was ever yet found, except in the wild boy that was caught in the woods of Hanover,) than in rejecting the use of the daylight, because of an hypothesis that we are derived from a spiritual source, and therefore ought not to be subject to such a necessity. Nor should I deem very highly of

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after a survey of the present potentates of the earth, to tell me how it is like to fare with truth and religion, if none be to appear and be owned in the world, but what we receive out of the courts of princes, or senate-houses of the State that governs it.

REPLY.

that man's solidity, who reasoned out an opinion against the goodness of the sun, because some philosopher had found out that its disc was liable to be obscured by occasional spots. And to this point I think the argument is to be maintained, for every man's belonging to the Church which the civil magistrate has declared to be the national Church, and to which is given the custody of the national places of worship, for its separate ministry; that it is the authorised Institution of the State, and that Church to which, *primâ facie*, every man born within the State owes his ecclesiastic allegiance. Unless, indeed, it may be held that there is no such thing as allegiance due to a Church, in the same sense as it is due from a subject to his prince; which is by reason of a connection between them as governor and governed. But that is not the question under consideration, which is, what ought to be taken by a man for his true Church; not, whether there be such a thing as a Church at all.

The civil magistrate does not en-

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force any uniformity of worship to the people, except in the national temples; and how this should be otherwise, I cannot conceive, unless it be said, there ought not to be any parish churches; but that the Christian doctrine and sacraments should be left to shift for themselves, and the people be trusted to the chance of meeting the true ministers of Christ. But although such a system would afford great scope to the most zealous in proselytism, it should seem to give little security for an universal pastoral care of the people, or for protecting them from the propagators of spurious and base religion, under the name of Christianity. For we should not forget that St. Paul says, "some, in his day, who professed the name of Christ, walked so, as that they were the enemies of the cross of Christ."

All that the national institution of an established Church professes is this, that in every place the people be provided with teachers from that Church which is held to be true by the State; so that, if men follow unsound

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doctrines, they who are their governors may be guiltless of their blood, as having taken due care that they are provided with a secure fold against the beasts of the field, (if they choose to resort to it), in every local district of the country. And if a people govern themselves, and neglect to secure themselves by the provision of a national Church, of which the truth is established by the best *guarantees*, they seem equally chargeable with the guilt of their own blood, as a tyrant who banishes all religion whatever from among his subjects.

What Mr. Locke says about "the magistrates instituting religions," is quite enigmatical; nor is the expression of "forcing men to such ways of worship as the magistrate shall think fit to enact," more justly used, as applied to the Church of England. What the magistrate has done is, "not the instituting of the religion of the Church of England," but the having declared that this Church is the truest and most legitimate, of all those which profess a di-

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versity of modes in the worship of Christ. And having pronounced this decision, the magistrate has put it into possession of that national endowment, which the people have provided for the maintenance of true religion amongst them. By this decree the magistrate no more compels men to adopt the national mode of worship, than the Christian religion compels men to go to heaven by having proposed the Gospel to their acceptance, and not the Pentateuch or the Koran.

§ 11. I say not this with any reflection on the present age we live in; but let him, if he please, take any other age recorded in history, and then (if the rulers of the earth were to prescribe the way to heaven, if their laws were to be the standards of truth and religion,) let him tell me what advantage it would ever have been to true religion, to subject it to the power of the magistrate: and if princes and

§ 11. Again the question is confused between what the established Church does for itself, and what the laws of the land do for it. Now, the laws of the land (or as Mr. Locke calls it, the magistrate) do not at all profess to "propagate truth" immediately, nor "to make subjects of the kingdom of heaven;" but mediately only, and by lending its support to that profession which gives the best *guarantees* for possessing the truth, and for preserving it pure in administering it to the people.

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potentates are not like for the future to be better informed, or more in love with true religion, than they have been heretofore: if they are not like to be more sincerely concerned for the salvation of their people's souls, than every man himself is for his own, I do not see what reason we have to expect that these laws should be the likeliest way to support and propagate truth, and make subjects of the kingdom of heaven for the future.

REPLY.

Was it Henry VIII. or Cranmer, who framed the articles of our establishment; and was it for the opinions of Henry VIII. or of his Church, that that martyr sealed the truth with his blood? The true Church found acceptance with the powers that then were, we may believe, by the help of that particular Providence, which watched over the whole course of the Reformation; but the powers of the State had nothing to do with the instituting of the priesthood, with whom the Church all along rested, nor was the reformation of the Church effected by the powers of the State, but by the priesthood itself. It was not against the legitimacy of its title to the priesthood, that Luther objected to the Church of Rome, but for a corrupt abuse of the true priesthood, whereby it administered not the Gospel of Christ and his sacraments, but new doctrines and spurious rites, not avouched by the Gospel. That great reformer came to the conclusion, that the Church in which he was ordained had corrupted herself, by finding that

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her doctrines and sacraments were not derived from the Gospel, but from the commandment of men; and the objection to her authority extended no further than the human authority which she had mixed up with what was Divine: and thus the reformed priesthood still holds its descent from the Roman Church, as from one which was duly invested.

Again, when the Roman Pontificate was first given by the Emperor Phocas to Gregory the Great, the Roman Church was pure from those corruptions which now exist in her; but the self-sown attributes, which have since taken her tenets out of a dependence on the Gospel, have also taken away from her all the testimony of the early martyrs; for those gave their blood for a different doctrine than that, which the Roman Church now professes. It is from this cause, has arisen the system of canonization in the corrupt Church; since the *guarantee* of holy men, which is required in testimony of a true Church, would not otherwise have been

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possessed by her. The corrupt Church of Rome, therefore, has not two of those *guarantees* which, together with an apostolic descent, are possessed by the Church of England: for she has neither the Gospel as the rule of her doctrine, nor the testimony of martyrs, truly applicable to her institutions.

§ 12. In the dispute of ceremonies, our men speak of their Church as if it had such a Divine power, that it needed not consider whether any thing were suited to the ends for which they were made use of, and so the Church need not consider whether any thing be fit, and therefore appoint it; but as good as say, that they make them fit by appointing, which, whether God ever did, I much doubt, but I am sure nothing can do it but an Infinite Power.

§ 12. The substance of this argument is, that because the Church has instituted its own ceremonies without Mr. Locke's agreement to their suitableness to the end proposed, therefore *proh pudor!* it is to be inferred,—not merely that they are not suitable, which itself would be an egregious assumption,—but, that the makers of them had assumed an attribute more potent than the Deity, of making things fit which are incongruous, by only appointing them to be.

That a body of men should set about forming a system, having a professed object, without consulting the means by which the professed object might be most effectually attained, or without any rea-

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sons for adopting one thing and rejecting another, may be believed by those who choose to believe any thing that suits them, but will never be entertained for a moment by any impartial man. Nor does it seem necessary, that a body acting with legitimate authority should be required, either to promulgate the reasons of its enactments, or to rest the acceptance of its decrees upon the opinions of others, who have no authority in the matter; for then the authority would be in those who judged of the enactment, and not in those who made it.

§ 13. It is not enough to justify the imposing of ceremonies, because in themselves they are not unlawful, but if by their number or inconvenience they are burdensome, they cannot be justified who impose them. This was the reason Peter uses against the circumcision, Acts xv. 10, because it was a yoke that could not be well borne. To continue them as neces-

§ 13. There is something so loose and inaccurate throughout in the terms of this argument, that if it were possible to suspect Mr. Locke of wilfully obscuring a cause, it might have been thought he intended it in this case. He was not capable of doing that; and the present is a proof among many, how wide of its mark the best mind may deviate, when operated upon by a bias.

It naturally occurs, on reading

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sary, when the ends are ceased for which they were appointed, is to extend the metaphor of pastor and flock a little too far. Circumcision in itself was indifferent, and in the time of the Gospel might be used when there was a good end in it, as St. Paul circumcised Timothy; but if its injunction proved burdensome, as Acts xv. or there was an opinion that it was unnecessary, it became unlawful.

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this passage, to whom does he refer, or to what institutions does he refer, when he says, "It is not enough to justify the imposing of ceremonies?" To whom, was it "unlawful to enjoin circumcision, if it proved burdensome," and to whose "opinion, was the necessity of its injunction to be referred?" But on these important points of an hypothetical case, the proposition is left entirely in chaotic darkness, without form and void. And yet, who can take even Mr. Locke's word, that under no possible circumstances could it ever have been lawful to ordain an inconvenient ceremony; without any qualification as to the extent of the authority, or the insufficiency of the objectors?

The deliberation, which the apostles held upon the subject of circumcision in the Christian Church, if it shew any thing, shews very plainly that they had authority, either for imposing or not imposing it: they had at least authority to deliberate on the subject; and if we say, it was not lawful for them to impose the other

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side of the alternative about which they deliberated, it must still be admitted that it rested with themselves only to decide, which was lawful of the two ; and the proposition would mean no more than if it were said, that Parliament had not power to enact something, at variance with what it has enacted, and which by its decision has become the true law, and shewn the other alternative to be not the law.

That the "*command*" of the apostles was the rule of the Church, and not the "*reasons*" of the apostles, appears in this same instance ; as Mr. Locke would have perceived, if he had examined the whole transaction ; for such is expressly asserted in the letter by which they transmitted their decision to the Church of Antioch. "Forasmuch," says this document, "as we have heard that certain, who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying ye must be circumcised and keep the law, to whom we gave *no such commandment,*" &c. The case seems very

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similar to those instances in our own times, in which the Church *has been troubled* with the intrusive opinions of sectarians, teaching the necessity of trine emersion in baptism, or some other peculiarity of observance in their mode of worship. On such points it does seem for the peace of mankind, as well as in accordance with the delegation of Christ to the apostles, that they should be referred to the Church, as the question about circumcision was. Certainly, there is no sect in the world less burdened with a conscience about observances, than the Church of England is ; unless it be considered that her demand upon people to lead holy lives, and to communicate in the sacraments and public worship of God, is a burden ; and from this yoke I know not how any Church can be exempted, except it be such as holds out the Gospel freedom as something, which opens the door to licentiousness.

Again, Mr. Locke speaks of the circumcision proposed to the new converts, as a thing indifferent in itself ; whereas, St. Peter tells us,

that the burden attempted to be imposed was, "the circumcising the converts, and compelling them to keep the law." Was that an indifferent thing, of which St. Paul declares, that "if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing; for I testify to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law?" Gal. v. 2. The decision of the apostles shews also that the moral obligations consequent upon the rite were intended, and not a merely indifferent thing; for it was a determination, "to lay *no greater burden* than these necessary things, to abstain from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication." If, therefore, Mr. Locke had looked through the books of the New Testament, he could hardly have met with an instance more contrary to the whole tenor of his reasonings, than this one which he has produced in support of his argument. For here the Church deliberates, not only upon an outward ceremonial, but also upon the personal conduct of its

people ; who are required “ to conform ” their lives to a rule, no where propounded by our Saviour, and apparently adverse to the professed freedom of the Gospel.

The Church of England does not justify its ordinances upon the ground of their being only not unlawful ; she professes the same rule as actuated the apostles in prescribing theirs—which is, that she hath done all things to edifying. She does not, indeed, inquire, if every man in the community agrees about the suitableness of her ordinances to promote a Christian edification among the people in general ; but she judges them herself, to be neither too numerous nor too burdensome. Some men have judged the decent white, which is worn by her priests in administering the functions of their office, to be an intolerable burden ; but are such objections as this to be taken against an institution, in which a reverent communion between God and man is administered by a legitimate priesthood, duly prepared and dedicated to that particular duty ; and avail-

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§ 14. It is not unlawful to separate from a Church which imposes even indifferent things, if those who imposed them had not the power of imposing: for what is imposed by those who have not the authority to impose, can have no obligation on any to observe it; and therefore they may go where there are no such impositions, and this is more for the peace of the Church, than to continue in it and oppose it. The convocation, with or without the civil magistrate, have not a power to impose on all Englishmen.

REPLY.

ing themselves of such decent rules and indifferent insignia, as have throughout all ages been regarded suitable to functions, such as they are required to exercise?

§ 14. This view of a man's right to withdraw himself from an usurped authority may be truly taken; for, although every man has not a right to resist authorities which are *de facto*, he does not seem to owe that full allegiance to an illegitimate authority, which follows him into every region with respect to what is legitimate. In the place where an established power rules, there he owes obedience or at least submission; but he may withdraw from the place and be discharged of his local allegiance, and that, at his own pleasure.

But this general proposition, on which the force of Mr. Locke's argument is founded as to the Church specially, does certainly not bear upon the true question under consideration. For who ever pretended that an usurped power had a demand upon the allegiance of mankind? The ques-

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tion is, whether the Church does usurp or not in ordering ceremonies to the people.

It is singular, that in this argument, while Mr. Locke is all along contending that no Church can have the power of binding men in any sort of conscientious obedience to its institutions, he shews that his own secret conviction was, there is some power of the sort somewhere. For, what else can be inferred from the exception he makes to the general rule, "if those who imposed them had not the power of imposing them;" but that it is possible there should be some case, where those who imposed might also have a power of imposing? Or what does he intend in the sentence next preceding, "that those cannot be justified who impose ceremonies, which by their number or inconvenience are burdensome," &c., but that a power of imposing suitable ceremonies does exist somewhere?

The nodus of the two consecutive propositions in this argument produces, however, a difficulty, upon which the force of Mr.

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Locke's objection seems to be rested. The Church is not justified in imposing ceremonies, which are too numerous or too burdensome; *therefore* those, who do so, *exercise* an *illegitimate* authority: no man is bound to keep within the pale of an illegitimate authority; *therefore*, any man may withdraw from a Church which exercises an illegitimate authority, *and therefore*, from a Church which imposes too numerous or burdensome ceremonies.

To this sort of objection, however, it may be said, that a great distinction is to be observed between "the exercise of an illegitimate authority," and "the illegitimate exercise of an authority;" and that the delictum of a true Church, which imposes burdensome ceremonies, is within the latter definition. If the Church have authority to impose ceremonies which are proper, the imposition of what is superfluous does not make the authority of the Church illegitimate, still less does it give any authority to others. If

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ceremonies are good and to be appointed by somebody, somebody must have the authority to impose them ; and it seems, a power of imposing means nothing at all, if every man has the right to withdraw from the Church, because he thinks some one ceremony burdensome or more than sufficient. It never was contended that the institution of ceremonies by the Church of Rome rendered her authority illegitimate ; and if she had confined herself to the exercise of mere ceremonies, and not practised herself in gross superstitions by connecting her lawful mandates with doctrines not found in the Bible, (as the mass and confession are, the bowing down to the cross, and the invocation of saints,) I think, all the pageantries of the Church of Rome would have been submitted to by those who wrought out the Reformation, out of a regard to the acknowledged authority which the Church had. The Protestant Reformers protested, not against the authority of the Church over its people on such points, but against certain corruptions which

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the Church of Rome had adopted ; and the ground of withdrawing themselves from her Communion, was such, as if a daughter should withdraw herself from associating with her mother, who was living in open adultery. The daughter would not necessarily deny the general power of a parent by doing so, nor forfeit the right of a parent over her own offspring, as if she had denied a general principle.

Mr. Locke says, " the Convocation, with or without the civil magistrate, have not power to impose on all Englishmen." The Convocation is the legislature of the Protestant Communion, properly speaking, and whether the civil power adopt its laws or not, is a matter entirely for the civil power to decide upon. But if the civil power have adopted its canons, as the rule by which the ministry of the parochial churches throughout the country should be administered, then the Convocation with the magistrate, has a power to impose upon all Englishmen to this extent, that no other

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form of doctrine or ceremonies, than those of the Protestant Church, shall be introduced into the parochial churches; and that the clergy of the Church of England shall not be disturbed in the exercise of their ministry in the public places of worship, upon any pretence of common right in them. Certainly the Church claims nothing as an inherent right, but only the privilege of safe preaching; and if the Church of England, specially, has any civil immunities or civil rights, she holds them conventionally and by the same title, as other public bodies hold other civil rights.

§ 15. The charge of separating from our Church will not reach many of the Dissenters, who were never of it.

§ 15. This is a verbal truism; but the fault of being separated from the true Church, if the national Church be the true Church, is surely something. The only palliation to a non-conformist, born of schismatic parents but living within the precincts of the national Church, if that be the true Church, is, that he is not the maker of the schism in which he lives.

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§ 16. I suppose it will be allowed that a man may be saved in the Presbyterian, Independent, or Hugonot Church, of which there are now in England, and are or are not distinct Churches from the Church of England. If they are not, they cannot be accused of separation, being still parts of the Church of England; if they are, and a man be a member of the Presbyterian Church, will he not be guilty of sin if he separate from it, and go to the Independent, unless he can prove any doctrines and ceremonies sinful in the Presbyterian Church? And if so, the same sin he will be guilty of, if he separate from that Church, and come over to the Church of England: for if there be no sin in the doctrine and discipline of the Church he leaves, there is sin in his separating from it, wherever he goes after separation.

REPLY.

§ 16. With regard to the question, how far salvation and conformity with the true Church are dependent upon one another, I shall not offer any opinion. The subject is one of momentous consideration, and certainly is not, whatever we may hope, to be assumed in the affirmative with all that facility, Mr. Locke has used. As far as reason is concerned, the only reasoning which can be properly used, is by induction. For if Christ instituted a ministry to baptize into his body, it should seem He confined the power to that ministry; and if those, who hold that office by His appointment (in opposition to those who are pretenders), are the same persons to whom He gave His charge, to go and teach all nations, it should seem that the office of administering the sacrament of baptism and the office of preaching the Gospel belong to the same men and are exclusive.

What, therefore, Mr. Locke says, about separating from the Presbyterian or any other sectarian body, and coming over to the Church of

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England, is beside the question, if the Church of England be the true Church ; for these are of no Church at all, but sectarians from the Church. And it should seem, there can be no more sin in separating from an untrue mode of Christian communion, in conformity with more legitimate authority, than for the heathens to have forsaken their idols to conform to the Gospel, at the preaching of Christ and His apostles.

I have no anxiety to raise a prejudice against Mr. Locke's general sincerity, but it must be confessed on this subject, he betrays a bias towards the question he is advocating, which I may be allowed to urge as a set-off to the great authority of his name. Beyond this, I would not make use of it ; but when we find so formidable a name, as John Locke, arrayed against the principles of a general unity in the ministration of Christ's word and sacraments, it may be permitted to point out, that this great man was not above the influence which a party feeling will exercise over the most acute minds.

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He first advocates the cause of the independent sects against the authority of the Church, and therefore in a former passage, where he is directing his reasonings against the authority of the Church to keep men within its precincts, he says, that the *mere lawfulness of ceremonies* is not sufficient to justify those who impose them, if they are burdensome by their inconvenience; and, that it is not unlawful to separate from a Church which imposes even indifferent things, if those who impose them have not the power of imposing. But here, where he is advocating the right of sectarians to live out of the Church, he professes, that a member of the Presbyterian Church will be guilty of sin, if he separate from that Church and come over to the Church of England, *unless he can prove any doctrines or ceremonies sinful* in the Presbyterian Church.

I believe I have stated the substance of the two arguments faithfully, and I need make no comment upon them.

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§ 17. For being supposed, both of them, innocent in their doctrine and discipline, the only odds remaining between them will be, the law of the land, which I think I have shewn can give neither authority nor advantage to the one Church over the other, but only in preferments and rewards; and that indeed they have, but are not content with it, unless they have dominion too. But if it should be said, that they may, without sin, come over to ours, because our ceremonies and discipline are better, (for we suppose them to agree in doctrine), they are only better, as they are better means of salvation, so that it will follow, a man may separate from a Church lawfully, in whose communion there is no sin, only for better edification: for supposing the State of England being again Popish or Heathen, or on any other consider-

REPLY.

§ 17. That the union of a particular profession of religious tenets with the civil power of a State necessarily makes that to be the true Church, is not pretended by any one, and never could be; because, if the Church of England were separated from the government to-morrow, and another taken in her place, she would not lose that title, which the *guarantees* of her institution afford; by which she claims to be known as the *true Church*, above all others. But the Church, whatever it may be, which is established as the national Church has a priority of claim, a *primâ facie* title, which its establishment, and no other reason, gives it above all other professions—and this arises from the certainty, that its proofs of title have been examined and weighed by men of acknowledged authority, before it became established as national. And therefore, although it is incumbent on every one to weigh the character and pretensions of the established Church, it does not seem equally

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ation should take off all the secular laws that oblige to conformity, would it be any more sin to separate from the Presbyterian Church to come to the Episcopal, than it would be to quit the Episcopal to go to the Presbyterian ?

REPLY.

incumbent on every man to search into all the bye-paths of pretended illumination, or other unrecognised sources of particular ordination. And it should seem sufficient to exempt a man of the established Church from sinning in the matter of his religious communion, if he use due diligence in satisfying himself of the truth of her ordination, and in revolving the question as to the pretensions of others, not by reference to their tenets or ceremonies, but by the legitimacy or illegitimacy of their origin.

The value of Mr. Locke's estimate of the ceremonies and discipline of the Church, as a matter *per se*, (whether here applied hypothetically or not, I shall not stop to enquire, for I will not assume that he puts the proposition as his own opinion,) is different from that which the Church of England entertains about them, if he would infer that the *means of salvation* can rest in the ceremonies themselves, or that these can be made either better or worse for effecting an individual's salvation. I remember that our Saviour rebuked

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the Jews for attaching the value of things to the wrong quality; and the rebuke seems to be applicable to this sort of opinion. "For whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?" And as he was mistaken, who swore by the gold of the temple and not by the temple, so it seems rather that he is mistaken, who would fix his faith upon any ceremonies, without considering the authority which gives them any value at all, and all that they possess. In the hands of the *true Church*, ceremonies become a means of communicating the promised graces of the Christian communion, *because* they are sanctified and recognised by God; but it does not follow that God should recognise the same ceremonies if practised by an unappointed power: except perhaps, as He recognised the sacrifices made by Saul; which was by excluding the practitioner of them, as the worthy companion of such, as used the nefarious arts and ceremonies of witchcraft.

§ 18. If the supporter of

§ 18. If the legislature of Great

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the Church of England, who is well versed in Church history, would recollect himself, he would certainly not say that the great reason of *retaining* of the ceremonies in our Church by our Reformers, was the reverence to the ancient Church, since they themselves, in the preface to a book he has every day in his hands, say so much otherwise. In the preface made and prefixed to the Liturgy in Edward the Sixth's time, and continued there till this very day, concerning the service of the Church and ceremonies, they declare, that *the great reason* of the changes they made, and the *chief aim* they all along had in it, was the edification of the people; wherein, though with great reason, they referred themselves to the ancient Fathers of the Church, yet it was only so far as the Fathers of the Church followed the great rule of edification.

REPLY.

Britain should state in the preamble of a modern statute, that the "*great reason*" and the "*chief aim*" of the statute was to preserve the liberty of the subject, for which cause they give such and such rules about the administration of the courts of justice, is it to be inferred from such a preamble, that there is no reference at all to the great principles of liberty, established by their ancestors in Magna Charta. And yet such appears to be the scope of Mr. Locke's argument.

The Reformers, indeed, limited their reference to the more ancient authorities, where, in their judgment, a modification was required in unessential matters; but certainly, the authority of the ancient Church was the first *rule* of the Reformers' proceeding, as the edification of the people was the *chief aim*, they proposed by that rule to accomplish. The reason, why a man repairs a church, is, that the people of his own generation may have a place of resort for public worship; and though he may make some slight modifications in the

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cold and comfortless avenues of the ancient building, yet the general reference would be to the style and form of the old structure ; and that would be the first *rule* which he would observe, while he would profess, with equal truth, that *his chief aim* had been, to render the church as commodious as possible. I cannot but think, there is a confusion in Mr. Locke's argument between the object proposed by the Reformers, and the rule of their pursuing it.

§ 19. Why else did they leave out many of the most ancient ceremonies of the Church, though in themselves innocent, when they suspected them rather a burden than profitable to the people.

§ 19. If it is here meant that the Romish ceremonies, which were in themselves innocent, and were swept out of doors as rubbish by the Reformers, were the institutions of the ancient Fathers of the Church, such an intimation does not seem accordant to the fact. Many of those ceremonies arose with the corruptions of the Roman Church ; and most of them were connected with those corruptions, though in themselves innocent. Thus the practice of sprinkling with holy water, which Mr. Locke might hold an innocent

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ceremony, was the concomitant of the doctrine of penance and private absolution. The having of images and relicts followed the canonization of saints. The elevation of the host, that of the transubstantiation of the elements. All these, and such as these, arose long after the Fathers of the Church; unless Mr. Locke calls the Romish Fathers, Fathers of the Church; which they cannot properly be regarded.

Upon the principles which regulated the Reformers in their institution of the Reformed service and ceremonies of the Church of England, I must, judging by what reasons they have given, and what rules they professed to observe, believe that their views were soundly adopted. If they omitted any ceremonies, which were only innocent, I think their profession on the point is sufficient, that they preserved what tended to edification, and that, consequently, they regarded the others as vain, and perhaps of a superstitious complexion. I have yet to learn, however, what ceremonies, that

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§ 20. And what they say concerning bringing in use again the reading of the Scriptures in a known tongue, viz. that the people might continually profit more and more in the knowledge of God, and be more influenced with the love of his true religion; and therefore left out a multitude of responses, verses, vain repetitions, commemorations, synodals, anthems, and such like things, as did break the continued course of reading, I suppose it will not be said in themselves unlawful; but the reason they give was, because they made the service hard and intricate, and jostled out the more profitable reading of the Scripture.

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could be properly called innocent, were cut off by the Reformers.

§ 20. It does not follow, because the Church in reforming itself from corrupt innovations, did give some of its reasons for the reforms effected, that therefore the latitude of its authority was limited to the precise boundary of the reasons given. The persons by whom the Liturgy and ritual of observances were reformed, received their authority before they gave their reasons; and whether they should declare to the world the motives which guided their deliberations, and how far they should publish their reasons, seem equally to have been in their own discretion. It is not, therefore, surely, to be inferred, because they did explain their general views of the objections to the old ritual, and the means they took to establish a more edifying formulary, that such a preamble was at all requisite to the validity of their power, or that the authority they held was at all dependent upon it. Nor does it follow, be-

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cause the Reformers took advantage of the necessity laid upon them, to make a general scrutiny of the Church's formularies, by the peculiar circumstances of their recent separation from the mother Church of Rome, that they upheld the principle of a frequent, or of any future innovation on the established services of religion, for any cause whatever. Such, however, seems to be the induction, aimed at by Mr. Locke; as if the reform once imposed upon the Church, could be taken as a precedent for innovation, on every occasion that a few indifferent people might raise a cry, that they were weary of the old service and desired one more agreeable to the indolence, or any other equally religious disposition, of the times.

§ 21. And concerning ceremonies, they say thus, "Of such ceremonies as be used in the Church, and have their beginning from the institution of man, some were at first of godly intent and purpose devised, yet,

§ 21. An instance will illustrate the meaning of the "Preface" better than Mr. Locke's Commentary; for, the invocation of saints arose from a beginning, which was "of godly intent and purpose devised, and yet at length turned to vanity and superstition." The

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at length turned to vanity and superstition ;" (whereby I think it plain that things not only lawful in themselves, but godly in their first institution, may become unlawful).

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origin whereof was, " the godly intent" of rendering illustrious the virtues of those, who had been celebrated for piety or learning in the Church ; for which purpose an anniversary was held, and a speech commemorative of the subject recited. The eulogies bestowed on these sacred persons, were not unfrequently addressed in an oratorical style, as if to the person himself, but with those reserves of expression which shewed the true character of the address, and its merely commemorative nature. The change of this useful incitement to imitate the virtues of the dead, into a direct veneration and worship of departed spirits, is the kind of abuse referred to in the " Preface."

But what does the argument of Mr. Locke on this subject, intend ? Would he intimate, that there are any institutions in the Church of England, " originally lawful and godly," which are now turned to " vanity and superstition ?" For if he does not, I do not see what object, his argument proposes.

§ 22. "Some entered into the Church by indiscreet devotion, which not only for their unprofitableness, but also because they much blinded the people and obscured the glory of God, are worthy to be cut away and rejected; others there be, which, although they have been devised by man, yet it is thought good to reserve them still, as well for decent order in the Church, for which they were first devised, as because they are for edification, to which all things done in the Church, as the apostle teacheth, ought to be referred." Whereby I think it is plain that no ceremony devised by man ought to find admittance in the worship of God, even upon pretence of decency and order, unless it some way or other conduces also to edification.

§ 22. As far as may be collected from the statement of the "Preface" and Mr. Locke's commentary, the views which directed the Reformers, and those which Mr. Locke entertained, are the same; and, therefore, his commentary is superfluous and unmeaning as applied to the reformed ritual. He *supposes a difficulty* indeed, by distinguishing between ceremonies retained for the sake of decency and order *only*, and those retained for edification *as well*; but he does not mean that the objection, thus hypothetically concocted, should be applied to the acts of the Reformers, because he shews what they had done, to have been done *as well* for edification as for decent order in the Church. All therefore that he shews, is this, that the members of the Convocation, who remodelled the Liturgy, had the same perceptions about the important trust they had to fulfil, as Mr. Locke. Or it may be taken to shew, that a man can reason upon the duties of a station in which he has no part, with equal accuracy to those who belong to it. But

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that does, surely, not affect the question, as to who has the authority to institute, and who not : for else, a barrister would have as good a right to give judgment in a cause as the Lord Chancellor, only because he could reason as well.

Had the Reformers, however, (unhappily for the stability of their work against the attacks of acute reasoners, like Mr. Locke) omitted that saving avowal in the preface, of their intention to edify the Church, as well as provide it with suitable rules for its religious observances, I could not have admitted the force of the distinction, here taken. That a conclave of persons, assembled together for the express purpose of instituting a ritual for a congregation of Christians, and "that men might profit more and more in the knowledge of God, and become more influenced with the love of His true religion," should have pursued that object without a view to *edifying* the Church, is hardly to be maintained. The judges to whom the administration of justice is committed, are supported by lesser

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authorities and ceremonies calculated to aid the general objects of justice, and to the *edification* of the court upon the particular subjects, brought before it; and if the rules for decency and order in the Church, tend to the general design of inculcating the truths of religion and its sacraments, then they should seem to be within the meaning of the apostle, and done *to edifying*.

§ 23. Now if we will but take a view of the Reformation, and its sober and discreet progress, we may observe how the Reformers, in their management of it, kept steady to this great rule and aim, viz. of bringing the people to the knowledge of God, and the practice of his true religion.—See Burnet's History of the Reformation, p. 73, respecting the ceremonies.

§ 23. This is a noble testimony on behalf of the Church of England, as by law established. It is the testimony of a man, not over well affected towards her, and able by the powers of his mind to have discovered the blemishes of her institution, that the priesthood who effected the work of her establishment, were not only men of the purest piety, (as indeed their private histories assure us), of the brightest faith in the truth of their own professions, (as the martyrdom of many testify), but also were actuated by no fiery zeal or bigotted enthusiasm, in what they did, but by sober and discreet

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views, wisely calculated for bringing the people to the knowledge of God, and the practice of His true religion !

§ 24. It is plain that several of the ceremonies were retained and allowed only to the desire of the people, and allowed with limitation.

When the Common Prayer Book was reviewed, (see Burnet, p. 155. 170,) the additions were very sparing, and such as were very necessary for the edification of the people at that time. The other changes, p. 283, 392, Hist. of Reform.

§ 25. I have been thus particular to shew what governed *those wise and pious Reformers*, in their proceedings at that time ; and we may observe all through, that the great difficulty that possessed them was, how they might lessen the ceremonies,

§ 24. That the Reformers consulted the character of the times and people, may be admitted to a certain extent. The prayers for the King and the Parliament were suited to the English constitution, and no other ; and a similar regard to lesser peculiarities may have influenced them in some other particulars. But it is not to be inferred from this, that a subservience to the desires of the people was the reason or the rule of the Reformation ; as Aaron cast the calf, to satisfy the tumults of the host of Israel.

§ 25. That the Church has the power of changing the forms of its ceremonies, as well as of instituting them, cannot either be doubted. The one necessarily implies the other : but, that it is also necessarily called upon to do so, at the instance of every dissatisfied spirit, whether sectarian or in its own

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without lessening their converts. The men they had to do with were, we see, fond and loth to part with them, and therefore they retained as many as they could, and added some again in Queen Elizabeth's time, which had been used in King Edward the Sixth's time, only to satisfy the people, and as a fit means to hold them in, or bring them over to our communion, whereby they plainly kept close to the rule of the Scriptures, which they had set to themselves, of doing all things for edification, and had been, besides, the precept, the command of St. Paul, who became all things to all men, that he might gain some.

§ 26. But is the case so now with us? Have we now any hopes of fresh harvests among the Papists, and to gain them over to us by the multitude of lawful ceremonies? I fear not. I hear

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body, by no means follows. It owes a duty to posterity as well as to the present race, and is bound to transmit the institutions, it has received from its ancestors, in something like an integrity of form, to its successors in the race of life. Whatever analogy, therefore, may be imagined on this point, with the adoption of different modes of instruction by St. Paul, according as he had to deal with a Jew, or a Greek, or a barbarian, (for Mr. Locke would not have held, that St. Paul became a heathen in practice, in order that he might teach Christianity to heathens), I do not think it could be applied to sanction that perpetual change of institutions towards one and the same people, which this argument desires to accomplish.

§ 26. Mr. Locke seems here to intimate, that the great object of the Reformers, in the institution of their ceremonies, was the conciliation of the Roman Catholics; who it was hoped to catch by the preservation of the old ceremonies.

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of nobody, that after so many, so long an experience to the contrary, (and their being now fixed upon quite different fundamentals, by the Council of Trent,) that thinks it now reasonable to expect it. But on the other side, Protestant dissenters are so great a part of the people, upon the same principles with us, and agree with us perfectly in doctrine, and are excluded from our communion, not by the desire of more, but by their scruples against many of those ceremonies we have in our Church, can any one say that the same reason holds now for their rigorous imposing, that did at the Reformation at first for their retaining, where the Reformers did not so much contend for, as against, ceremonies? I appeal to the Church of England, whether the opinion can be held, that if those *wise and worthy men* were now again to have the revising of our

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Whereas, the professed aim was, the general edification of the Christian Church. And as to any particular reasons of the Reformers, all that can be urged on the subject, beyond what they have stated, must be wholly conjectural. With respect to the proposition of conceding the forms of religion, adopted as suitable and unexceptionable in their own character, I do not myself see the propriety of such a procedure; nor does Mr. Locke make out any case, that could by possibility admit of remedy; since no ritual could ever be established, which would not be liable to exception on the grounds, he here proposes for a revision of his own. The instance of revision brought forward, which took place in the time of Queen Elizabeth, was accompanied by a restoration of the Protestant Church from the recent usurpation of the Papists under her sister Mary; and although it might have happened, that the first essay at a new Liturgy, made under Edward VI., should have a little missed its full aim, and required that small re-

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Liturgy and ceremonies, they would not as well leave out the cross in baptism now, (as well as they left it out in confirmation and consecration of the sacramental elements, wherein they had once retained it,) and as well as they left out several others, in use in the ancient Church, to comply with the weakness, and perhaps mistakes, of our dissenting brethren; and thereby hold some, and gain others, to our communion, as well as they retained several they had no great liking to, only to avoid offending those, who, by such compliance, were more likely to be wrought upon? And of this mind I think every one must be, who will not say that more charity and Christian forbearance, more care and consideration, is to be used for the saving the souls of Papists than of dissenting Protestants.

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adjustment, which it received under Elizabeth; it is not to be believed, that that revision would ever have taken place, if the institutions of the Protestant Church had not suffered a temporary dislocation, by the interregnum of Queen Mary's hierarchy.

The reserving of the cross in baptism, as a sign of the faith into which the person is baptized, and its rejection in the rite of confirmation, seems a judicious discrimination between the solemnity of a sacrament and a less important act of communion; and, connected as it still is with the distinction, observed by the Protestant Church and not by the Roman Catholic, between the sacrament of Christian baptism and the ceremony of confirmation, it seems to be wisely preserved in the one rite and not in the other.

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§ 27. I hope it will be thought no breach of modesty in me, if from a heart truly charitable to all pious and sincere Christians, I offer my thoughts in the case. At the beginning of the Reformation, the people, who had been bred up in the superstition and various outward forms of the Church of Rome, and had been taught to believe those substantial and necessary parts, nay, almost the (. . .) of religion, could not so easily quit their reverend opinion of them; and, therefore, in a Church that endeavoured to bring over as many converts as they could, the retaining of so many of those ceremonies as were not unlawful, was then to enlarge the communion of the Church, and not narrow it; since the people of that time were apt to take offence at the too few, rather than the too many ceremonies. So that ceremonies then had

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§ 27. This argument is likewise built upon an assumption, that the sole end and aim of the Reformers was to institute a ceremonial, agreeable to the people. Now it does appear, that that proposition is wholly gratuitous; for no where is it apparent, that such was the real case. The Reformers received the ordinances of the ancient Church, out of a regard to their established antiquity and authorised institution, so far as they were accordant to the great principles of the Christian religion. The old Church was not spurious but corrupt, and what had not originated in her own corruptions, was descended from a pure and venerable antiquity. These parts were preserved in the ordinances of the Church of England, and rest upon the authority of antiquity; not emanating from the Reformers, as the dispensers of new forms at the prayer of the people, or from any other cause, but as the refiners and purifiers only of a precious ore from an alloy, which had become mixed up with it. I cannot but think the proposition, which

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one of their proper ends, being a means to edification, when they were inducements to the people to join in communion with the Church, where better care was taken for their instruction.

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would make the Church institute ordinances, by a rule calculated to suit certain opinions which, as they are found *in situ*, are opposed to the Church, is a contradiction in terms. I cannot but entertain a conviction, that it is precisely *that crime*, which is so vehemently denounced as the spiritual *adultery* of the Church. It is, at least, a submitting of itself and putting its purity to hazard, by cherishing within its bosom principles, of whose full import it can know nothing, but what the sectarian spirits to whom it properly belongs, choose to reveal. And it does seem agreeable to reason, that a power given to any body to institute religious ordinances, involves a consequence, that men born within those ordinances should bow their opinions to the ordinances, and not be justified in requiring that the ordinances should shift and change about, in order to suit their opinions. This is "conformity," and to this extent all men are bound to conform. There is a virtue in the true Church of Christ, by the nature

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of its Divine institution, so long as it acts within the proper bounds of its institution, sufficient *for securing to mankind* all the endowments of the Christian communion; and the only matter for men to ascertain is, the truth of the Church, and where the true Church is to be found. Whether the Church of England be that or not, I need not here again consider; but I may again say, that the proper way to judge of the true Church, is by the *guarantees* which are afforded,—for an apostolical descent,—a doctrine in accordance with the Gospel,—and a witness by the blood of martyrs, properly applicable to its existing institutions.

§ 28. But the sad experience of these later years, makes it, I fear, but too plain that the case is now altered; for as we at present stand with the Church of Rome, we have more reason to apprehend we shall be lessened by the apostacy of those of our Church to them, than increased by

§ 28. The whole of this argument goes to shew, that Mr. Locke's notion about edification was nothing more, than the making of converts; and, as he conceived the Church had baited a net, by the kind of ceremonies adopted at the Reformation, proper for catching Roman Catholics; so it became expedient, and therefore of necessity wise and right, to amend the terms of

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gaining new proselytes from them to us. The *harvest for such converts has* been long since at a stand, if not an ebb; and being, therefore, likelier to lose than gain by any approaches we make towards them in outward agreement of rites and ceremonies, the retaining now of such, though lawful, cannot but in that respect be injurious to our Church, especially if we consider how many there are, on the other side, who are offended at and shut out by the retaining of them. And, therefore, the taking away of as many as possible of our present ceremonies, may be as proper a way now to bring the Dissenters into the communion of our Church, as the retaining as many of them as could be, was of making converts at the Reformation. So that what then was for the enlargement, now tends to the narrowing of our Church, and *vice versâ*.

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the Church's communion in his own time, that it might captivate and take some of the stragglers of the dissenting sects. Such a rule, however, could not be satisfied by one, nor by any given number of applications, but must be practised as every new spirit of dissent manifested itself; and thus the Church be made to appear continually in new liveries, suited to the great men's houses, in which she desired to have an inheritance.

Such, however, I may take leave to observe, is not the scriptural idea of "edification;" which is, not to provide means for inviting new members into the Church, but to "build up," for that is the signification of the word, what is already in communion. The only terms of invitation, I am aware of, that the Church of England holds out for admission into the fellowship of Christ's communion, are baptism and the promises which are given to the Church in that Sacrament, and administered from the Church to the convert. Repentance, and repentance only, a change of heart into "a con-

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formity" with what the Gospel enjoins, is the only "lure," which the true Church of Christ can condescend to propose; and the rite of baptism, administered by authorised hands, is the only avenue of approach into that net, which happy is he who falls into; for it is the true fold of Christ, to which there is but one way of approaching, as he has declared of it.

§ 29. Since Dissenters may be gained, and the Church enlarged, by parting with a few things, which, when the law which enjoins them is taken away, are acknowledged to be indifferent, and therefore may still be used by those that like them, I ask whether it be not, not only prudent, but a duty incumbent on those, whose business it is to have a care of the salvation of men's souls, to bring members into the union of the Church, and so to put an end to the guilt they are charged

§ 29. The plea of charity is specious; for it assumes a preponderance of good on Mr. Locke's side of the question. But it would not seem to be any charity to the Church at large—that is, to its established members,—to subject its institutions to a perpetual vacillation. What reverence could men feel towards a ritual and religious ceremonies, or rather for the things they are made use of to impart, if one week they were administered in one form, and the next week in some other form.

The question, about the duty of those whose business it is to have the care of men's souls, is a proper

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and lie under, of error and schism, and division, when they can do it at so cheap a rate? Whereas, whatever kindness we may have for the souls of those who remain in the errors of the Church of Rome, we can have small hopes of gaining much by concessions on that side.

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subject of consideration with those persons, but I must say, it does not appear to have belonged to Mr. Locke. This opinion is given entirely *ex parte*, and without appeal; for the reforming conclave were no longer in being. Had he been of their body, the probability is, that the first initiatory lesson into his then proper business, would have removed all those preliminary obscurities, which it is the part of professional wisdom to remove and put away. “De picture, sculptore, fictore, nisi artifex, judicare non potest,” says the younger Pliny; and it does seem requisite for every man to know the true principles of any art, before he ventures to give an opinion about it. That Mr. Locke did not understand the true principles, upon which the Reformation of the Church was conducted, I must maintain to be shewn in the whole of this argument. Nor do I perceive any other result, likely to arise from the publication of his opinions, than that of raising unquiet thoughts in the minds of many, well disposed towards a

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part of the argument, was for the sake of the argument, and could be for no other cause. In that part, however, he was labouring to impugn the acts of the Church, by shewing that she had done more, than she ought to do ; but to effect this, it was necessary first to pinion her true and natural powers, and limit the boundary of her eagle wings to a small terrestrial paradise, of Mr. Locke's own planting. I trust, however, she is not doomed to be consigned to such a state ; but, while the proper element, in which her abode has been fixed, is far above the highest mountains of the earth, she will not be brought into subservience to any earth-born, giant though he be.

§ 31. Whatsoever is arbitrarily imposed in the Church, no way subservient to that end, is beyond the authority of the imposer ; nor can any one be bound by the terms of communion which our Saviour does not allow to be made. This funda-

§ 31. All the institutions of the Church of England, I must repeat, are professed to be, "for decent order in the Church, and for edification." The talking about "an arbitrary imposition" by her, is therefore, an invidious expression ; for it might, with equal justice, be applied to every exercise of autho-

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mental mistake is the reason, I suppose, why, in this dispute about ceremonies, the champions for conformity speak generally of the Church in such a manner, as if it had such a Divine power, that it need not consider whether any thing were suited to the end for which only its use can be allowed: and therefore this, our mother, (whether it be the mark of an indulgent one I will not say,) need not consider whether any thing be fit, and therefore appoint it but as good as tells us, that she makes it fit by appointing; which, whether God our merciful Father ever does, I much doubt; this, I am sure, nothing but an Infinite Being can do: and therefore to make such things by an arbitrary power, and continue them as necessary, when *the ends are ceased* for which they were appointed, is to extend the metaphor of pastors and flocks a little too far, and

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ity. The laws imposed by the authority of Parliament, of which the reasons have been debated by three deliberative bodies are, in this sense, arbitrarily imposed. I may say, therefore, that this is pure railing, and the outpouring of an invidious feeling towards all authority; which, that Mr. Locke entertained, need not be trusted to this instance, but may be collected from the general tenor of his reasonings, and his own declarations.

The *insinuation*, however, that "the Church of England entertained an opinion of itself, that it had such a Divine power, that it need not consider whether any thing were suited to the end, for which only its use can be allowed," is worse than mere railing. It is a slander against the honesty of that Reformation, which yet, Mr. Locke allows, was established "by wise, and worthy, and pious men."—Throughout, he acknowledges her to be only chargeable with not changing her institutions, agreeably to his doctrine of edification; that is, of proselytism; whereby

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treat men as if they were
brutes, in earnest.

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the ordinances held by a whole community, established in their faith and bound in covenant with their God through the intervention of those ordinances, and daily *edified* by their observance, should be given up to the captious objections of men, who are not of the same spirit with the Church of England, as the nature of their objections prove to demonstration. For I apprehend the opinion, that a private objection to ceremonies is a ground of separation from the true Church, *is of a spirit essentially different, in all its religious features, from that of the Church of England.*

The allusion to the possible "impotency" of the "Omnipotent" to make a thing fit by appointing it, and which is so favourite an idea with the reason of Mr. Locke, that he introduces it twice into this Essay, (though it is difficult to conjecture by what hand the *rasa tabula* of his mind should have received the inditing of such a notion;) has to me a complexion of impiety: and the induction, that as God cannot act without reasons

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for his acting, therefore it was incumbent on the Reformers to entertain no other views, as to the grounds on which their proposed institutions should be founded, than such as accorded with the reasoning of Mr. Locke, which was founded on different principles altogether, seems to me to be utterly inconsequential, and wide of the true subject : which is, whether the Church of England ought to regulate her institutions by her own authority, (which implies a deliberation,) or by the opinions of others, not of her body.

The "fundamental mistake" is in the argument of Mr. Locke, who would give the authority of the "Mother," (as he calls the Church, and admits it to be,) into the hands of her children; and hold her to be a tyrant and her children treated like "brutes in earnest," only because she entertains an opinion relative to the mode, in which her household should be managed, different from a rebellious spirit in one or two of her offspring, to whose dictation

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§ 32. All the Dissenters can be accused of, is nothing but their *refractoriness*, in choosing to lose the privileges of our Church communion, which they lawfully may do.

[There follows here, an argument upon a question, which seems so wholly confined to the time when Mr. Locke wrote, that it does not seem worth recapitulating in this place.]

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she refuses to surrender her proper authority.

§ 32. If Mr. Locke means, by the word “lawfully,” according to the laws of the land, he is right. But, as men are not to be saved by the laws of the land, but by the Christian covenant, it behoves them to have a better reason for rejecting that covenant, than a legal right, according to the statute, of forsaking the Church and *refractorily* choosing to lose its privileges. Because such a “refractory spirit” is able to defeat all other pretensions to religion; as the intrusion of Saul into the authorised functions of the Jewish Church, though done with the best intention,—as the world judges of intentions,—brought an utter rejection of him and his family from all communion whatever.

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§ 33. As to the law of the land, it can never be judged to be a sin, not to obey the law of the land, commanding to join in communion with the Church of England, till it be proved that the civil magistrate hath a power to command and determine what Church I shall be of: and therefore all the specious names, established constitution, settled Church, signify nothing, till it be evident the civil magistrate has that power. It is part of my liberty, as a Christian and as a man, to choose to what Church or religious society I will be of, as most conducing to the salvation of my soul, of which I alone am judge, and over which the magistrate has no power at all: for if he command me of what Church to be, it is plain it follows that he can command me of what religion to be, which, though nobody dares say in direct words, yet they do in effect af-

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§ 33. Whatever concerns the government of a people, and the preserving of the civil constitution, acknowledged as that of the community, is a proper subject of consideration with the civil magistrate: and so far, as the question of religion affects the stability or insecurity of the civil peace and well doing of the people, its nature and profession is a proper subject of consideration, that is of adoption or rejection by the civil government. If a sect should arise up in the people, teaching that it was proper to commemorate the sacrifice of Christ by human sacrifices; can it be said, that the civil magistrate might not prohibit the practice of such a religion? And if it has the power of superintending, at all, the concerns of religion, it has the power, throughout, to examine into the pretensions of different sects, who all profess to be the true Church, and to give an authoritative judgment on behalf of the weak and unlearned, as to which is the true Church; and so much it seems its bounden duty to do. Not (as Mr. Locke argues)

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firm, who say, it is my duty to be of the Church of England, because the law of the land enjoins it.

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to say, what Church a man shall belong to, as if there was more than one Church in a spiritual acceptance; but to point out to the people, what is the Church by the acknowledgment of their civil governors. And the words "established constitution," "settled Church," means just as much as entitles the subject, to which they are applied, to the same reverence, because it is constitutionally settled, as is usually bestowed by men upon the old fabric of what they call, "their glorious constitution," when applied to the institutions which preserve to them their civil rights and liberties. The established Church is entitled to all the reverence, usually bestowed on the civil constitution, because it owns the same origin, and has been gained to the people by the same struggle and out-pouring of their ancestors' blood. But it has, beyond this, an exclusive title to the veneration of the people, which results from its greater antiquity; and from the early purification it went through, when it separated itself from the Gentile nations, as

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its later struggle was undertaken to separate it from the Roman Catholic superstitions. It has yet a higher title than all these, by its direct connection with the institution of all religion, and as derived from hand to hand through all the long succession of ages which divide us from the apostles and their divine Founder. All these considerations might have been nothing to the reason of Mr. Locke ; but as reason lost the world, and religion must reclaim what is to be reclaimed of it, so it is to be hoped men will be content to submit questions, not legitimately referred to their consideration, to the reason of those with whom the authority is reposed. To remember, that however they may think to devise unexceptionable, systems, in their own minds, for paying homage to their Maker, "to obey is better than sacrifice ;" and that their real object, when enquiry must be made, is to find out where the authority rests ; which (as regards the outward circumstances of Christ's Church on earth) must exist

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§ 34. To understand the extent, distinction, and government of particular characters, it will be convenient to consider how Christianity was first planted and propagated in the world. The apostles and evangelists went up and down, preaching the new doctrine, and the better to propagate it, went from city to city, or one great town to another, and there published their doctrines, where great collections of men gave them hopes of most converts. Having made a sufficient number of proselytes in any town, they chose out of them a certain number to take care of the concerns of that religion. These they called the elders, or bi-

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somewhere; and having ascertained that, by the best judgment which can be formed from good and tangible evidence, to walk with confidence and steadfastness in the rules prescribed by that authority.

§ 34. If Mr. Locke would imply, that the Church should imitate the example of the apostles in following mankind to their most populous abodes by its ministers, there can be but one opinion on the correctness of his views. In this particular, there is some deficiency in the establishment of a merely parochial clergy: and the departure from the old Saxon constitution, which put a body of clergy at the disposal of the diocesan, by whose authority their labours were directed throughout his whole diocese according to the need of the people, is to be deeply lamented. The evil of confining the Church's ministry to fixed local cures was not, however, apparent, till the mercantile habits of the people began to develop themselves, by collecting

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shops, who were to be governors of that city, which so became a particular Church, formed much after the manner of a Jewish synagogue. Such a constitution of a Church we find at Ephesus, Acts xx. and in several other places.

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large bodies together in towns and cities. While the fruits were consumed in the places where they were grown, the local distribution of the clergy was a wise adjustment: but when the consumers moved off into large societies, to which the produce of the land was imported, this provision missed its true aim and became partially inefficient. From this cause the charge of tythes is become, from being an adequate means of provision, an inadequate means. But if made on the consumers, it would still be the properest mode of providing for the national Church. If three-fourths of the corn, grown in Lincolnshire, is consumed in the large manufacturing towns of Yorkshire, there seems no good reason why the tythes, payable for it, should be applied where the people do not live who consume it, and for whose spiritual provision the tythes are designed. It is true, the places of the growth must not be deserted; but it does seem a feasible proposition, that wealthy benefices in unpopulous districts should contribute to the

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provision of a ministry, to be employed in the populous districts at the discretion of the diocesan; and this, without infringing upon the vested rights of patronage in the Church. A restoration to the diocesan of his ancient authority to distribute his clergy, under certain modifications, would of itself go a great way to accomplish this desirable end.

But this is not the true drift of Mr. Locke's argument; which is to shew, that the apostles having left different cities to the administration of their own elders, therefore, the Church is not bound to be of one uniform character in its doctrine and institutions. He should at least have shewn, that the Churches thus apostolically founded did differ in their characters; or that St. Peter inculcated one form of doctrine and discipline, and St. Paul another. But no such thing; the apostles were all baptized into the same spirit, and what one taught was the teaching of all; and the different Churches were long in the habit both of meeting toge-

ther, and of communicating by letter with one another, for the purpose of confirming each other in an unity of faith and religious communion.

The instance, quoted by Mr. Locke, shews of how extreme an importance the apostle St. Paul considered it, that the elders should keep a watchful eye over the doctrines of their whole body. He calls the Ephesian Church to meet him for the last time. He reminds them, how from his first coming into Asia, he had been with them at all seasons, and had kept nothing back that was profitable to them. He declares, that they would see his face no more, but that he was pure from the blood of all of them; because he had not omitted to declare to them the whole counsel of God. And what does he add to this solemn appeal? —Therefore, take heed to yourselves, and *to all the flock*, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (bishops); to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know, that of your own

themselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. "Therefore, watch!"—and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one, night and day." Can it be doubted, that the exhortation, to watch over themselves, intended that they should take measures for preventing the propagation of perverse things among their own body;—or, that this charge was given to the elders collectively, as to a body endued with powers, sufficient to observe the admonition so forcibly directed to them. The instance proves distinctly, that a purity of teaching was to be provided for by the authority of the whole body of the elders; and, if it shews that an unity of doctrine was to be inculcated, it shews that it was essential to those who were taught.

§ 35. When a Church was thus planted in any city, these itinerant preachers left it to grow and spread of itself; and from thence,

§ 35. How contrary to the fact it is,—that the apostolic founders of the Church left it to grow and spread of itself,—may be seen by the epistles of St. Paul to the

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as from a root, to take in not only those who from thenceforth should be converted in the city, but in the neighbouring villages; and having done this, I say, they went to plant the Gospel in some other city. And the apostle St. Paul having preached the Gospel, and made converts in all the cities of Greece, stayed not himself to appoint the elders, but left Titus there to do it, whilst he himself went on to publish the doctrines of life and salvation to those that sat yet in darkness.

The particular churches in different cities, directed by the prudence, and enlarged by the preaching of these presbyters, under whose cares they were left, spread themselves, so that in succession of time, in some places they made great numbers of converts in the neighbourhood and villages round about; all which, so converted, made an accession to, and be-

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Churches which he had founded; and of which he was still the overseer, or bishop, to whom all their difficulties were referred. What means, else, his admonition to the Corinthians, respecting their conduct to the adulterous brother? —What, his letters to Titus and Timothy; giving them episcopal charges, as to their doctrines and the mode of teaching the people? —What, his own express avowal, “that he had the care of all the Churches?”

“I beseech you,” says the same apostle to his Roman Church, “to mark them, which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and to avoid them. For they serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. But your obedience is come abroad unto all men.” Rom. xvi. 17. Surely, a regard to pure doctrine is intended to be inculcated; and a warning to the Church, to keep itself from associating with schismatic spirits!

It is difficult to find out, how

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came members of the Church of the neighbouring city, which became an episcopacy, *παροικια*, from which our own name, parish comes; the diocese, which was the name that remained in use for a Bishop's diocese a good while in the Church. How far the *παροικια*, in the first times of Christianity, reached the signification of the word itself, which denotes neighbourhood, will easily tell us; and could certainly extend no further than might permit the Christian that lived in it to frequent the Christian assemblies in the city, and enjoy the advantage of Church communion. Though the number of believers were, in some of those cities, more than could meet in one assembly, for the hearing of the word, and performing public acts of worship, and so, consequently, had divers basilicas, or churches, as well as several presbyters to officiate in them; *yet they*

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this statement, respecting the establishment of the Christian Church in the first ages, does at all help the proposition Mr. Locke is defending: that a conformity to what the Church requires and enjoins, both in doctrine and discipline, is not to be maintained as essential to the profession of the Christian religion. We find a priesthood, regulating itself, and called upon in the most impressive manner by St. Paul, to watch its own body against a departure from those rules which had been given it; for these would become the subject of attack by schismatic spirits. We may ask, had the presbytery of that day any other *guarantees*, than what the Church of England now claims to itself? I believe none. But heterodox teachers would have possessed the same right then, to credence,—by asserting their own credibility,—as the modern sectaries have. If the evidence of the true Church had been so clear, because of its nearness to the apostles, as to admit no question at all, there could have been no room for schism;

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continued one Church and one congregation, because they continued under the government of the same presbyters; and the presbyters officiated promiscuously in all their meeting places, and performed all the offices of pastors and teachers indifferently to all the members, as they, on their side, had the liberty to go to which assembly they pleased; a plain instance whereof we have in some of the Protestant Churches beyond sea, at Nismes and St. Gall.

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and it is evident, therefore, that the same choice between the right and the wrong existed in that day, as does in this. What, therefore, Mr. Locke has said, in an earlier part of his Essay, about all professing teachers in our times having the same Divine right, for aught he knows, is precisely the same argument as must have been used by people, who separated from the earlier Presbytery, on pretence of some doctrine which suited the distempered state of their spiritual appetites; and of which, to speak scripturally, the itching ears were only a symptom of their true malady. And if Mr. Locke's reasoning be good at all, it was good to excuse men in the times of the apostles, as well as those of the present generation, for quitting the Church, and congregating about the tabernacles of sectarians:—men, who deal not in the whole sincere truth of God, but huckster forth small modicums of schismatic doctrines, in which they so fix the minds of their hearers, that they grow into deformity; and, like the enthusiastic

devotees among the Indian nations, cramp their spiritual bodies into some one line or direction, till the natural gifts which nature has not only offered, but actually put into their possession, are obliterated and lost!

The instance, which Mr. Locke contemplates with so much satisfaction,—of especial freedom in the converts of the early institution, is, that “they had liberty to go to which church or basilica of a paroichia they pleased.” He states, however, that the several churches were administered to by the different priests of the whole paroichia or diocese, indifferently; so that, these would have officiated interchangeably in all the churches of the united body. Now, what is the just inference from this, but that all the priests of the diocese were of the same doctrine; and bound together by a common head, which directed their labours in a due and regular course of administration? There is, consequently, no difference at all between the distribution of the ministry in the ancient paroichia

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and in the modern diocese, but this one circumstance ;—that the ancient churches were supplied from the diocesan or parochial church, from week to week, instead of being a fixed and permanent ministry, charged by the diocesan with a permanent cure of souls, and not temporary. The old paroichia is precisely, therefore, of the same nature as the '*Mother Church*' of the Saxon institution, which received the revenues of the whole diocese, and provided a ministry, perhaps with some degree of permanency, but certainly not fixed beyond the power of the bishop, to every district within its precinct or neighbourhood ; but these, as they arose from time to time within the greater jurisdiction, did, with the rising power of the feudal barons, become permanent ; and were endowed with the tithal revenues, which grew within the precinct of their village cures.

These endowments were most frequently granted at the instance of the great men, whose manors marked out the limits of the cures,

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and who built the village churches, which now overspread the country, for the use of their tenantry and serfs. And in return for this, a right of nominating their own pastors to the bishop was granted to them in perpetuity. By these grants, however, the proper functions of the diocesans became restricted in their most valuable power; which was that of varying the distribution of their clergy according to the need of their diocese, as well as of preserving a closer connection with, and a more rigid control over, the lives and doctrines of the village pastors, who were their emissaries.

The old system of a weekly distribution of the clergy, is that now pursued with the reformed Churches of the continent; but certainly without that good effect, which the theoretical purity of such a mode would give reason to hope. A general indifference prevails between the pastors and the people, and all those happy influences which the permanent nature of the English clergy has produced, by uniting the common interests

of the people and their pastors in one and the same bond, are wholly wanting. The reformed Lutheran Church is a teacher of the people, but no mother to them; nor do they regard her in any other light, than what is usually held of a town-crier, or the watchman who proclaims the seasons and appearances of the hours of darkness.

Whether the early paroichia, or parish, with its dependent churches, were governed by an assembly of the presbyters, which Mr. Locke very gratuitously adopts as certain, or by a head or bishop, is not very important to the point under immediate consideration. The office of bishop, however, or overseer of an ecclesiastical body, was certainly known and made use of in the time of the apostles; and it is probable, as the different neighbourhoods became fuller of converts, and required a variety of places for public worship, instead of one, by which a body of priests was rendered requisite, instead of the original apostle or preacher, that the office of bishop to superintend the general dispo-

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sition, and to keep an eye on the doctrines which the priests pounded, was gradually brought into effect.

Very early testimonies are found of the different degrees of the Christian ministry. "Παντες," says Ignatius in his epistle to the Church of Smyrna, "τῷ Ἐπισκοπῷ ακολουθεῖτε ὡς ὁ Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς τῷ Πατρὶ· καὶ τῷ Πρεσβυτερίῳ δὲ, ὡς τοῖς ἀποστόλοις· τοὺς δὲ διακόνους ἐντρέψετε, ὡς Θεοῦ ἐντολὴν διακονοῦντας· Μηδεὶς, χωρὶς ἐπισκοποῦ, τι πρᾶσσει τῶν ἀνηκόντων εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν."—"Let all follow the bishop, as Christ the Father; the presbytery, as the apostles; and let us reverence deacons, as those who minister by the command of God. Let no one do aught of those matters, which relate to the Church, without the privity of the bishop." This was written at the close of the first century, about seventy years after the death of Christ.

§ 36. This, probably, seems to be the constitution and bounds of the particular Churches, in

§ 36. Admitting, however, an independent government in every separate paroichia, it does not follow that a general license was

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the most primitive times of Christianity, different from our present parochial congregations and episcopal dioceses: from the first, because they were independent Churches, each of them governed within themselves by their own presbytery: from the latter they differ in this; that every great town, wherein there were Christians, was a distinct Church, which took no greater extent than what would allow the converts round about to have the communion and Church fellowship, in common with the assemblies of Christians in that town; but afterwards, when those Churches were formed into episcopacies under the government of single men, and so became subjects of power and matter of ambition, these preachers were extended beyond the convenience of Church communion: and human frailty, when it is got into power, naturally endea-

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permitted to propagate doctrines, or to vary the ceremonies of the Church, without the concurrence of the whole body; and if the members were liable to the control of the whole body, and answerable to the whole body, in what would the ancient paroichia differ from the national Church of England, except only in the extent of its jurisdiction. But although Mr. Locke certainly couples together the "constitution and the bounds" of the patriarchal Churches, as if the extent of a Church's bounds had something to do with its constitutional character; yet it can hardly be maintained, that the greater or less extent of district, over which the principle of union is extended, can really affect the nature of the institution. The very fact that the ancient Churches were patriarchal, as Mr. Locke calls them, shews them to have been of necessity small, and of primitive simplicity in their own character; while they possessed the seeds of a more extensive and complex system in their infant conformation. The patriarchal government of the fa-

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vouring to extend the bounds of its jurisdiction, episcopal parochias were enlarged; and that name being too narrow, was laid by, and the name of diocese, which signifies large tracts of ground, was taken to signify a bishopric; which way of uniting several remote assemblies of Christians and Churches under one governor, upon pretence of preserving the peace and unity of the Church, gave rise to metropolitans and archbishops, and never stopped (nor, indeed, upon that foundation well could it) till it at last ended in supremacy.

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mily of Abraham typified the future kingdom of the Jews;—but can it be said, that the type and archetype bore no true analogy to each other, because the one was a household and the other a kingdom.

Judging, therefore, from Mr. Locke's own statement, the true nature of the ancient Churches appears to have been the same as that of the Church of England; saving only, that one was patriarchal, and the other is national. The independence, claimed by him to every modern Church, is maintained in effect in the independence of every national Church, as a separate and self-governed body; but what he further demands, by comparing our dioceses to the ancient paroichia, would be truly attained, if an independence in doctrine and discipline were to be allowed in England to each particular diocese;—as if such had been really granted to each separate basilica or church in the ancient paroichia.

At present, a man may go from John o'Groats to the Land's End;

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he may cut the country in all directions, and he will find an unity of religious worship and doctrine in every parish church ; and the people are thus as secure of participating in "*no other doctrine*," than such as the common consent has agreed to be true and according to the Gospel, as the Israelite in his own land was sure of finding the true worship in the one sole temple of Jerusalem. The national Church is, therefore, "at unity in itself," which its prophetic announcement declared it ought to be ; and this seems to be the true end and aim of making religion a national concern, and an object of ecclesiastical regulation in its outward observances ; whereto it is as much the duty of every man to "conform" himself, as to submit to any other legal institutions whatever.

This is the general rule : to which, it is not pretended, the peculiar nature of the Christian religion does not give some latitude of observance. But it is far from giving a dispensation for its non-observance to a mere licentiousness of will ; or, as Mr. Locke

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very aptly calls the disposition to dissent, "a refractoriness" of mind. Gross corruption in the Church, a departure from its own proper defences, and an incroachment upon the boundary of civil authority, (where assumed by its own usurpation) may call forth an opinion against the legitimacy of such a power; but I am not aware, that such sort of abuses do, or at all can, from the nature of the English constitutional Church, ever exist in that body. The lamentation over human frailties does not, therefore, belong to our Church, and cannot, because it is not put in a situation to be tempted by them. The Church of Rome was not placed, as that of England is, in juxtaposition with the civil powers of the State, by which security on this point is provided for; but it stood alone, and above all civil powers. It was planted in a time, when the fountains of the great deep, out of which emanated all the sources of civil authority in the old world, were being broken up, for these were the Roman imperial government; and the Church of Rome had the tempta-

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tion offered, of absorbing a power, which was dispersed abroad, into the sphere of its own existing influence; and so, by uniting the temporal authority, which it thus found without a master, with its own spiritual authority, it became seduced, by the possession of an excessive power, to turn its Church to the pursuits of temporal influence and aggrandisement.

That objects of local ambition may actuate the minds of some few individuals in the Church of England, may be admitted without admitting that the principles, on which the Church of England is founded, are at all calculated to influence the minds of its general body with ambitious or worldly views; nor, indeed, with any other feeling at all, than that one sole object for which it was ordained; which is, to provide for the spiritual care and instruction of the little flocks, committed to its charge.

THE END.

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